

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 EB-07 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 STR-01 OMB-01

CEA-01 FRB-01 COME-00 /072 W
----- 097071

R 082025Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9070

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, ECIN, PFOR, HA

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION TO KISSINGER INTERVIEW

1. IN AN UNUSUALLY LONG EDITORIAL JANUARY 7 ENTITLED "STORM WATCH," THE SEMI-OFFICIAL "NOUVEAU MONDE" REVIEWED THE WORLD-WIDE DIPLOMATIC WRANGLING THAT FOLLOWED THE SECRETARY'S "BUSINESS WEEK" INTERVIEW. IT NOTED THAT ECUADOR WAS REFUSING TO ATTEND THE BUENOS AIRES OAS FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING, WHILE IN ADDITION VENEZUELA HAD DOUNCED THE NEW US FOREIGN TRADE ACT AS "ECONOMIC AGRESSION". CLAIMING NOT TO PASS JUDGEMENT ON ANY PARTIES TO THE DISPUTES, IT OPINED THAT AN AIR OF VIOLENCE IF NOT WAR PREVAILED.

2. THE EDITORIAL SAID THE SITUATION WAS COMPLICATED BY VENEZUELA'S EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE CENTRAL AMERICAN COFFEE PRODUCERS TO FIX PRICES. ALREADY, IT SAID, THOSE COUNTRIES WHO MUST MAKE THEMSELVES A PARTY TO THE COFFEE COMBINATION ARE BEING DESIGNATED, HAITI EXCLUDED. THE CRISIS IS INTESIFIED BY THE WORSENING RECESSION IN THE US; STAGNATION IS REAL, AND THE WORLD IS ENTERING INTO

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A VICIOUS CIRCLE FROM WHICH IT MAY NOT EXTRACT ITSELF CHEAPLY.

THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES STAND ASIDE AND PLACE THE BLAME ON THE CAPITALIST NATIONS, WHO IN TURN ACCUSE THE OIL PRODUCING STATES, WHO REPLY BY BLAMING THE CRISIS ON THE PRICE OF MANUFACTURED GOODS.

3. IT THEN SAID THE PRESIDENT DUVALIER BELIEVED THAT OIL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR IT (PRESUMABLY MEANING WORLD INFLATION) "BEYOND THE PROPORTION OF 2.5" ADDING, HOWEVER, THAT DUVALIER DID NOT ACCUSE ANYONE, AND WAS KEEPING AT AN EQUAL DISTANCE FROM THE ADVERSARIES.

4. NEVERTHELESS, THE EDITORIAL WONDERED ALOUD IF HAITI COULD "AVOID INDEFINITELY THE DILEMMAS OF THESE TIMES". IT SAID SINCE PRESIDENT PEREZ CAME TO POWER, VENEZUELA GAVE NOTICE OF ITS PRETENTIONS TO A CERTAIN LEADERSHIP CHARACTERIZED BY ITS 500 MILLION DOLLAR CONTRIBUTION TO THE IDB, AND BY PROMISES OF BILATERAL AID TO THE WESTERN HEMIPHERE'S LDC'S. COULD HAITI, WHICH BELONGS TO THE BAUXITE CLUB AND CARICOM, "RESIST VENEZUELA'S OFFENSIVE OF CHARM OR REJECT ITS MEANS OF SEDUCTION"?

5. THE EDITORIAL REVERSED DIRECTION WITH THE CAUTIONARY NOTE THAT DUVALIER'S OPENNESS POLICY WAS MARKED BY MODERATION, PRUDENCE, AND CONFORMITY TO THE OAS CHARTER. IT SAID WHILE DUVALIER WAS OPEN TO EQUALITY, SOLIDARITY, AND EVEN FRATERNITY, HE WAS OBLIGED TO YIELD TO THE COUNTRY'S NEEDS OF THE MOMENT, AND FOLLOW THE PATH TRACED BY LAW, JUSTICE, AND POLITICAL IMPERATIVES. WHILE HAITI IN PERSPECTIVE IS ON THE SIDELINES OF THE LARGER STRUGGLE, AS A PRODUCER OF COFFEE, SUGAR AND CACAO HAITI HAD TO KEEP A WEATHER EYE AND MAKE PREPARATIONS TO FACE ALL EVENTUALITIES. THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDED WITH AN EXPRESSION OF CONFIDENCE IN DUVALIER'S LEADERSHIP.

6. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THE EDITORIAL WAS MEANT TO INDICATE THAT DUVALIER IS TRYING TO KEEP HIS OPTIONS OPEN. IT COYLY BOWED TOWARD THE ARAB/VENEZUELAN ANALYSIS OF WORLD COMMODITY PRICES, AND VIRTUALLY INVITED VENEZUELAN SEDUCTION, YET MADE IT CLEAR THAT AT PRESENT HAITI CANNOT AGREE AS A "QUID PRO QUO" TO STRAY TOO FAR FROM THE US ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ORBIT. IN BRIEF, CAUTION AND PRAGMATIC OPPORTUNISM WILL GUIDE GOH ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO 1975'S ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTIES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, TRADE LAW, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PORTA00047
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750008-0256
From: PORT AU PRINCE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750169/aaaacisu.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <04 SEP 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS REACTION TO KISSINGER INTERVIEW
TAGS: EAIID, ECIN, ECON, HA, XM, US, NOUVEAU MONDE, BUSINESS WEEK, (KISSINGER, HENRY A), (DUVALIER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006